



## A Word about Ethics

### MISUSE OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY AND RESOURCES



#### **What constitutes a misuse of Government resources?**

- Any use of Government equipment, supplies, or services for personal unauthorized purposes, including:
  - taking office supplies;
  - making personal telephone and fax calls (although limited personal use is permitted);
  - assigning staff to personal errands,
  - using duty hours for personal business; and
  - using or disclosing nonpublic information, such as personnel information, nonpublic trade data, economic analyses, census data, and classified national security information.

#### **Are there any limits on the use of my Government position?**

- Yes. You may not use your public office for personal benefit or for the benefit of friends, relatives, and others with whom you have a personal relationship. You may not refer to your Government position in connection with personal activities (unless it is part of general biographical information or for a professional journal).

#### **May I use Government access to the Internet for personal purposes?**

- Yes. The Department permits employees to access the Internet and e-mail from office computers for personal purposes, provided that such use does not interfere with office operations, and is not for:
  - obtaining or viewing pornography,
  - partisan political purposes,
  - operating a business or other venture for profit,
  - uses that cost the Government money,
  - engaging in prohibited discriminatory purposes, or
  - illegal activities or other activities that would bring discredit to the Department.
- You are also allowed minimal use of printers in connection with personal Internet and e-mail.

#### **May I keep frequent flier benefits and other benefits I earned due to Government travel?**

- Yes. Federal employees may use frequent flier miles and other benefits learned from Government travel for personal use.